IN MEMORIAM

DIMITRIOS OREOPOULOS: FONDLY REMEMBERED AND GREATLY MISSED

Our friend and colleague, Dr. Dimitrios Oreopoulos, passed away 25 April 2012. This wonderful human being will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by all of us. He inspired all who knew him—personally or through his presentations and writings—to do better in all things that matter.

Dimitrios had major roles in the development and growth of the International Society of Peritoneal Dialysis (ISPD). He was a founding member of the Society and served as its president from 1996 to 1999. The photo of him at the ISPD Congress in Stockholm, 1995, was taken as he was about to take on that role. He is standing with three of the ISPD presidents who served before him.

Dimitrios founded the *Peritoneal Dialysis Bulletin* in June 1980, and by 1988, the *Bulletin* had become *Peritoneal Dialysis International*, the official journal of the ISPD. He served as editor of the journal from 1980 until 2003.

Born in Alexandroupolis, Greece, 24 May 1936, Dimitrios graduated from the University of Athens School of Medicine in 1960. He completed his training in Internal Medicine in 1966 at the same institution. At Queen's University Belfast, he served as a registrar in the Renal Unit from 1966 until 1969, and he obtained his PhD there. He served as a senior research fellow in the Metabolic Unit at Toronto Western Hospital during 1969–1970. He became a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and of the American College of Physicians in 1978.

Dimitrios joined the faculty of the Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto in 1970 and rose to the rank of professor by 1980. He was based at Toronto Western Hospital, a teaching hospital of the University of Toronto. There, he established and directed programs of in-hospital intermittent peritoneal dialysis, home peritoneal dialysis, and in late 1977, continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD). Publications and presentations of his experiences with CAPD using peritoneal

Dr. Dimitrios Oreopoulos.

Left to right: The late Dr. Bergström, Dr. La Greca, Dr. Oreopoulos, and Dr. Nolph, Stockholm ISPD Congress, 1995.

dialysis solutions in plastic bags in early 1978 led to a worldwide change in how CAPD was performed. [The beginnings of CAPD in the USA (1975 to early 1978) involved the use of dialysis solutions in bottles; the US Food and Drug Administration did not approve bagged solutions until October 1978.] He was also had administrative and clinical responsibilities in the kidney stone clinic and the metabolic bone disease clinic.

As well as acting as editor for *Peritoneal Dialysis International*, Dimitrios served as editor and founder of *Humane Medicine* (which became *Humane Health Care International*), the journal *Geriatric Nephrology and Urology*, and *Advances in Peritoneal Dialysis*.

Among his accomplishments are 555 scientific publications, 52 book chapters, 6 books, 60 letters to the editor, 230 published abstracts, 62 articles in meeting proceedings, hundreds of invited talks, and 5 scientific films.

He also received many awards, too numerous to list in full, but among which are the American Kidney Fund National Torchbearer Award and the American Society of Nephrology Belding H. Scribner Award. In addition to training fellows from Canada, he trained 86 nephrologists from other countries. He participated in the planning of multiple international symposia. He was founder and first president of the Hippocrates Hellenic Medical Association.

Numerous community and volunteer organizations also benefited from his time and talents. He chaired the Board of Trustees of the Hellenic Home for the Aged; was a member of a Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades established by the Government of Ontario; acted as first vice-president and then president of the Multicultural Alliance for Seniors and Aging; and was the first president of the Greek Orthodox Education Organization, a member of the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, and a member of the Greek Orthodox Order of Canada.

Dimitrios cared about the spiritual health of humans as well as about their physical health. As a child, he was educated by Greek Orthodox monks, and during his adult years, he frequently returned to spend vacation time at a monastery in Greece. He thought deeply about the purpose of life and the acceptance of death. The journals dealing with humane medicine and geriatric concerns

that he founded and the many symposia on geriatrics that he organized reflect his great interest in the meaning and the nurturance of each person's brief time on this earth. He blessed his many friends with almost daily e-mail messages expressing his joy in the beauty of life and his sorrows over human mistreatment of their fellows or our planet.

Family and friends all held a special place in his heart. He loved and took great pride and joy in his wife (Nancy), four children (George, Philip, Antigone, and John), and four grandchildren (Dimitrios, Constantine, Lukas, and Nicole). Several months before his death, he called many of his friends and colleagues to say goodbye and to tell them how much they meant to him. He made it clear that he was ready to accept death with peace of mind.

In 2007, Dimitrios wrote a lengthy note to his daughter Antigone, dealing with the acceptance of death. She had written to him asking for his thoughts on the subject. Antigone has shared his response with us and given us permission to include a few quotes from it. Closing this obituary with his own words tells more about this great man than anything we could write.

"The more I serve others, the more love for God I have and the more peace I feel. Does this give me less fear of death? Not exactly but I am convinced that it helps me....

"The important point is not to miss the journey of your life by worrying about its destination....

"You ask how I want to be remembered. I would like people I have loved in life to remember me and feel nice in this memory. To remember me and be happy that we had this opportunity that we met and that they and I have learned something good from each other. And perhaps to bring me back to life in their hearts and prayers and talk to me from time to time and pray for me."

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